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AUTHOR Ferando, Annette; Newbert, David


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ABSTRACT

Funded under the Women's Educational Equity Act, the Assertiveness Training Program for Single Mothers was offered to mothers with children enrolled in the Omaha Head Start and Parent-Child Center Programs. The 16-week long program, providing a total of 40 hours of training, covered a wide range of topics in addition to the initial workshops on assertiveness. Human sexuality, parenting skills, relaxation techniques, positive thinking, and community resources (e.g., law, housing, credit) were among the topics discussed. Basically, the original goals of the training were that participants would (1) gain a positive self-image, (2) recognize the alternatives available to them, (3) be able to express their needs and feelings to others, (4) take advantage of resources at their disposal, (5) implement in their own homes positive actions that would influence their children, and (6) acquire problem-solving skills that would enable them to make decisions and accept responsibility for their choices. Designed with other single mothers in mind and to include input from parents participating in the training program, contents of this handbook are organized under six topic headings: Being Assertive, Relaxing, Parenting, Being Positive, Sexuality, and Law/Your Rights. Each of the six brief articles provide suggestions, recommendations, and basic concepts, and are accompanied by photographs of mothers participating in the training and with their children. (RH)



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# Single Mother's resource handbook

HEAD START
CHILD DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION

OMAHA, NEBRASKA

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Women's Educational Equity Act Program
U.S. Department of Education

# Single Mother's resource handbook

Annette Ferando
David Newbert

Head Start Child Development Corporation
Omaha, Nebraska

Women's Educational Equity Act Program
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

T. H. Bell, Secretary

PS 012864

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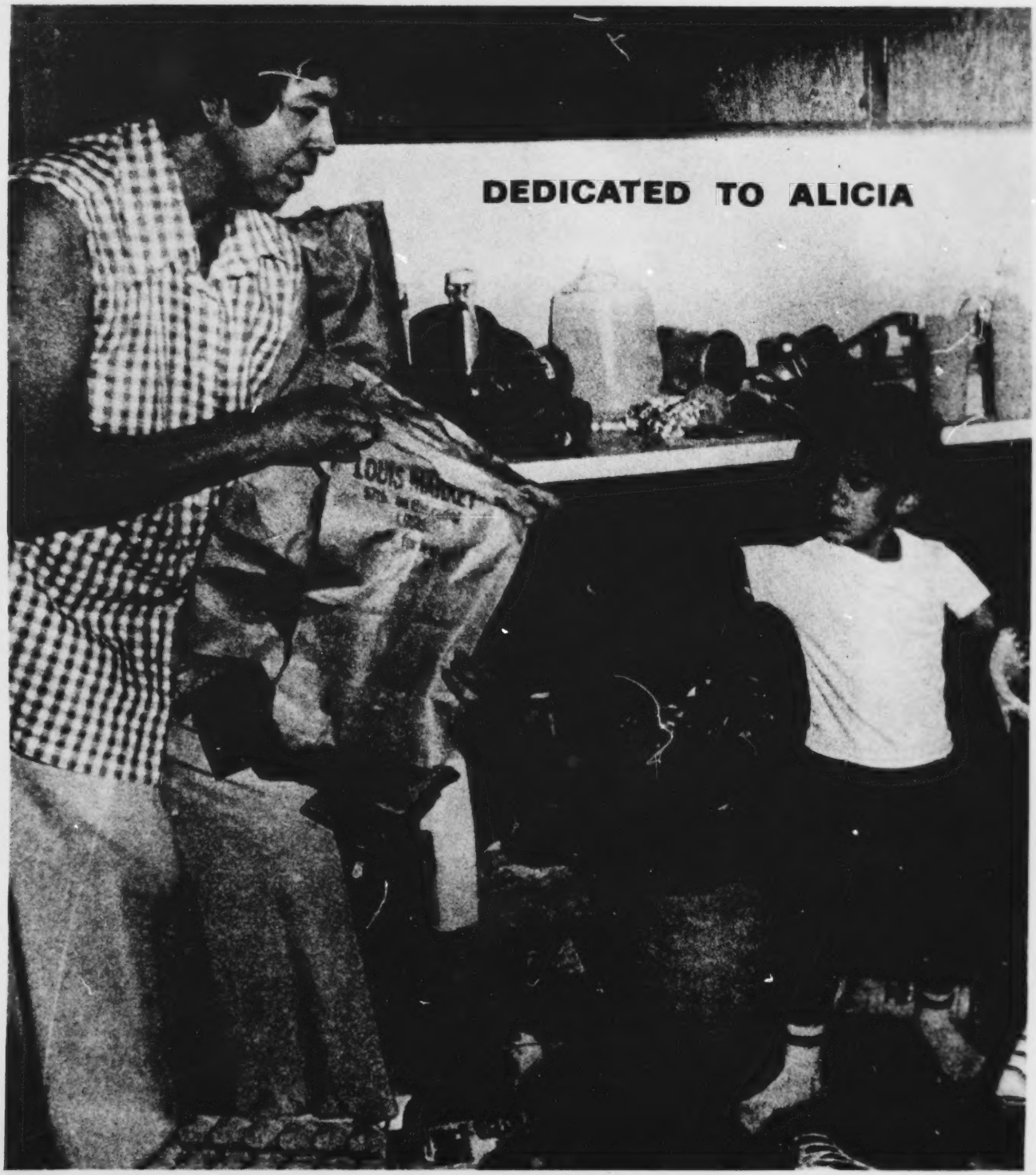
DEDICATED TO ALICIA

WRITERS

Marilyn Martin-Major, Margaret Vrana, John Whitehouse, Mary Ann Bianchi
Barry Spath, Tim Sindelar, Marian Williams, David Bones,
Betty Morar, David Newbert

PHOTOGRAPHY/ARTWORK

David Newbert

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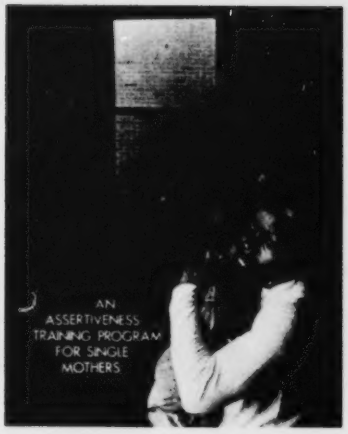
EDITED AND DESIGNED BY DAVID NEWBERT

# Introduction




The Assertiveness Training Program for Single Mothers was offered to mothers with children enrolled in the Omaha Head Start and Parent-Child Center Programs. The 16-week (40 hours total training) program was presented from February to June 1978 to thirty parents who expressed an interest in this type of training. A wide range of topics was covered in addition to the initial workshops on assertiveness: human sexuality, parenting skills, relaxation techniques, positive thinking, and community resources (law, housing, credit, etc.). This handbook is a product of that training.

The original goals of the training were varied but are basically as follows: that the participants would gain a positive self-image, recognize the alternatives available to them, be able to express their needs and feelings to others, take advantage of resources at their disposal, implement in their own homes positive actions that would influence their children, and, finally, acquire problem-solving skills that would enable them to make decisions and accept responsibility for their choices.

Those certainly were a lot of goals! When we first came up with the idea for the training in April 1977, we were told that there was no way we could change or affect the lives of people who were adults, already set in their ways. We went ahead anyway, and our proposal was one of about twenty small grants funded nationally under the Women's Educational Equity Act.

Because we felt that single mothers had to deal with so many daily hassles and problems over and above those of the "average" parent, we hoped that the training could serve as a model for similar groups nationwide. We also felt that if only one woman gained power and self-confidence because of the training, it would be worth the extra time and effort involved.

To cover everything from "How to Be Positive" to "How to Relax" to "How to Discipline Your Child" to "Law and the Single Mother" to "What and How to Tell Your Child about SEX" would easily fill many volumes. But considering costs, we obviously had to be brief. You can't please everyone, and we've probably left out things that should have been included. This handbook was designed only as a tool for your use--a small beginning, a source of reference. But please remember this: It was designed with you in mind (and had input from parents who attended the training). The Head Start Child Development Corporation was created solely to provide services to children and their parents (it currently serves more than 720 kids from prebirth to age 5). We hope you enjoy and use this handbook.

PARTICIPANTS' COMMENTS

RUBY FIELDS

"To me, the Assertiveness Training Program has taught me to take a firm stand for my rights as a single woman in an aggressive world. I have practiced quite a few suggestions. I have a large family (to coin a phrase, 'eight is enough'). Along the way, the unexpected and unpredicted always occurred. I didn't know that, when I decided to get a divorce (which was against my father's wishes), I would encounter the hardest job this side of earth. I was definitely not prepared for the task.

"Sharing our ideas and solutions with others makes us less lonely. We have accomplished a lot when we have helped others. I took trying to be the perfect parent too seriously and lost something along the way. We could use all the training sessions and role plays possible to lighten the load; as single parents, we feel it is our responsibility to bring up our children alone, but if only we sought outside assistance, we would be better parents. (You cannot do it alone. I know--I've been there.)

"I did enjoy the sessions and would like to see more training for parents. My self-image has improved tremendously in the last year."

ALICIA HEISSER

"If I may be so bold as to mention it, during 1978 I snapped out of my indifference, which had been causing ignorance on my part. I used to walk around in my housecoat...there was no drive. Since the training, I have experienced such a wonderful boost to my personal involvement. I am extremely sorry that the training and seminars were not introduced sooner so that I could be a better and prettier 'older lady.' (But now I'm gonna try for a beautiful grandmother image!)

"The counseling on good or better habits for a better daily functioning, grooming, etc. by Marilyn Major was terrific! I firmly feel that the crafts for the parents ('toys that can be made at home') were terrific, too.

"I've gotten involved. I'm experiencing some fun enrolling Julio in Cub Scouts and Boys Club. I've become a pack leader. I'm attending adult education at Logan Multi-Center in the evenings and also take sewing lessons there. I enrolled Raymie at pre-kindergarten. I got a job as a safety-patrol-crossing guard 3 hours daily. I go to monthly Title I meetings for Franklin School as an advisory parent. I work as a leader for 4-H. Thanks to the beautiful Head Start educational staff from 'the shy one who started asking too many questions too fast.'"

JEANNA JOHNSON

"Before the training, I wasn't able to speak up for myself very well. I definitely feel better about myself as a person now. I'm more confident and feel capable of making the right decision. A lot of times when you have to make decisions alone, you wonder, 'Did I do the right thing?' Having input and ideas shared with other people who had similar problems and were in the same situation was helpful to me. I think I can make a decision and stick with it.

"I use ideas and methods I learned at the parenting workshop quite often. I tell my sons WHY I discipline and take time to explain these things to them.

"I think the program covered just about everything and would like to see more training like it again. I'm glad I attended."

# BEING ASSERTIVE

Say What You Mean and Mean What You Say

by Marilyn Martin-Major

"ASK 100 PERCENT OF THE TIME FOR 100 PERCENT OF WHAT YOU WANT." Think about that. If we could really do that, how would it change our lives? It is not that simple, obviously, but it is worth thinking about. Basically, the above idea is what being ASSERTIVE is all about.

There are four kinds of behavior from which we can choose in almost any situation. (We'll discuss these four behavior choices in detail a little later in this section.) All of them make sense at certain times. The important thing to remember is that we do HAVE A CHOICE.

WHY YOU ARE YOU

We learn who we are and how to act, be, and think in three important ways:

1. BEHAVIORAL REINFORCEMENT. "You are a good girl"; "Don't sit that way--it's not ladylike"; "Nice girls don't make waves"; etc. These messages from others that tell us we are doing something right or wrong are examples of BEHAVIORAL REINFORCEMENT.
2. COGNITIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES. We learn in school how women and men are expected to act and dress, as well as the kinds of work women and men do and what kinds of games they may play. This "COGNITIVE LEARNING" (using our brains to understand, to acquire new knowledge, and to become aware) continues long after school, but our development of new attitudes slows down considerably.
3. The third and most important way is via MODELING. We watch other people (our mothers, fathers, big brothers, sisters, friends, teachers we admire, even T.V. stars) and borrow, copy, and absorb ideas, habits, and attitudes from them. We learn not only how to behave, but what to value and how to view certain events. For example, if your father thought honesty was important and you admired your father, chances are that you probably also believe honesty to be important. In other words, you value honesty.

YOUR RIGHTS

For the most part, women have given up the right to be assertive because it is seen as being aggressive ("pushy broad," "uppity woman," "mouthy little piece," "aggressive witch," etc.). Men can also be unassertive. It really is a human problem, but women are generally not raised to see themselves as being independent, separate, functioning people. A woman is usually raised to see herself as belonging to a man who will give her protection and who will make her need to be assertive unnecessary ("the man is supposed to take care of that").

Too often, a woman is seen as a wishy-washy, dependent doormat who can't take care of herself--both by others and by herself. After all, traditionally this has been considered normal "feminine" behavior. Unfortunately, that type of behavior is also used to stereotype a lot of other people as well--children, people in institutions, old people, oppressed minorities, etc. This description certainly does not fit people who have to take care of themselves (and probably take care of others as well), as millions of single mothers in America do, yet this "can't manage on

IF YOU FEEL LIKE A DOORMAT--THAT PEOPLE ARE WALKING ALL OVER YOU--
CHANCES ARE YOU AREN'T VERY ASSERTIVE

her own" name tag is usually attached based solely on sex.

A woman's real feelings are forced to fit an unnatural mold--her body image. Men fill more personal space than women do. For example, you probably don't stand very close to a man with whom you do business, but he may move in on you. Men's personal space carries more priority and they use it more aggressively. Try walking toward a man in a hall or on a sidewalk. Usually it is the woman who is expected to move or to give way. Men feel freer to touch women than the other way around. Women tend to keep their heads and eyes diverted when they speak with men, and often speak softly. All these actions take power away and say, "Don't listen to me. I'm really not important."

CAVEMEN

All this does not mean that men are "bad" (some of my best friends are men). We raise boys and girls to think of themselves now, as children, to be a certain way and to fit a certain role: "You can't do this," "Girls aren't lawyers," "Big boys don't cry," etc. These attitudes, learned as children, carry through as we grow up. We are taught as children how to be "feminine" or "masculine." However, times change

and so should some customs. Cavemen had to look big and mean to protect their women and children from enemies and hungry animals. Women and children had to be quiet to hide and stay safe. Those behaviors are neither practical nor realistic anymore. People do not live all together in caves anymore. Sometimes the woman is the only parent around, and she cannot afford to hide or be quiet. Learning to be assertive will help her to deal more realistically with the situations she faces.

## OLD ATTITUDES

Some attitudes that most of us have learned are:

BOYS ARE brave and courageous; GIRLS ARE timid and easily led.

BOYS ARE tough; GIRLS CRY easily and are weak.

GIRLS ARE easy to raise and easy to handle; "BOYS will be BOYS."

BOYS ARE supposed to protect girls because GIRLS ARE helpless.

GIRLS ARE expected to be helpful; BOYS do not have to help unless they want to.

## ASSERTIVE?

Women are becoming increasingly aware of the need to grow, to stand up for their rights, and to become responsible for their own happiness and mental health.

Is it good or bad to be assertive? If you were assertive, what would you be like?

First of all, you would feel free to say, "This is who I am. This is what I feel, think, know, and want." Being assertive would free you to be open and would allow you to reveal who you really are. You would be a better communicator on all levels--with strangers, friends, and family. You would have the ability to talk openly, to be direct, and to be honest. What you talked about would be appropriate. You would also be a better listener. You would be able to let the other person know that you heard her or him and understood what she or he was saying. You would be able to tell that person how you felt and what you wanted. If you were an assertive person, you would go after what you wanted, instead of just hoping something would happen. You would become an actor, not just a reactor. You would have self-respect. The assertive person does not always have to win. What is important is that we give it our best shot.

## FOUR CHOICES

The first question you need to ask yourself in order to start being assertive is "What are the choices of behavior available to me?" There are four.

1. NON-ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR (also called passive or submissive behavior). The non-assertive woman denies herself and thinks only of others. She can't express her real feelings for fear she will hurt someone or because the risk is too great. She is the "nice" person. Other people feel irritated around her or they feel pity and disgust. This is not goal-oriented behavior. (If you feel that winning is the most important thing--if there is no room for bargaining--then you may choose to be aggressive.)
2. AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR usually accomplishes goals, but does so at the expense of another person. The aggressive person attacks the other person, rather than the person's behavior. The aggres-

sive person feels righteous at the time and guilty later; the other person feels humiliated and hurt and may react in a passive-aggressive manner.

3. PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE behavior is another form of behavior associated, unfortunately, with being "feminine," because aggression is not acceptable. The passive-aggressive woman does not express her feelings directly but later does everything she can to cause trouble. She may give double messages: "Oh, don't worry about me, honey. I know you're too busy to come over and visit tonight. Of course I understand." She smiles while stabbing you in the back: "You look wonderful, dear, but goodness! I hadn't notice you had so much gray hair the last time I saw you."

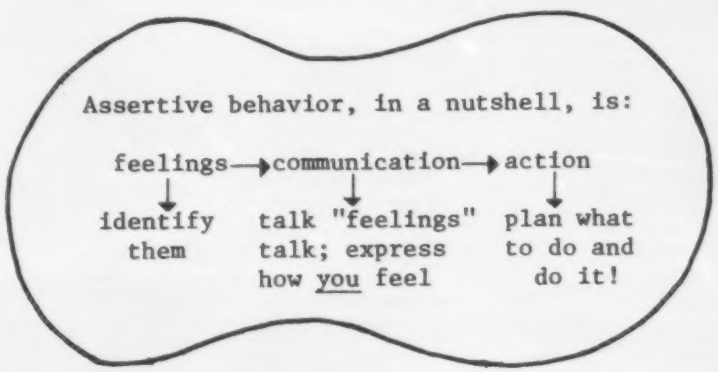
   The passive-aggressive person may use "humor" to put you down and insult you. Such people know your weak points and may use "jokes" to express hostility: "What gorgeous kids you have! They must look like their father. Of course I was only kidding!" "I always thought you were good-looking before you gained weight! Come on, now, can't you take a joke?"

   Sometimes passive-aggressive people never have to say a word. They play "guess why I'm mad" by slamming doors or drawers, sighing loudly, "accidentally" nudging you to make you pay attention, and similar actions.

4. ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR is goal-oriented behavior that does not invade another person's rights. It shows consideration but does not indicate a readiness to fetch and carry. The assertive person communicates respect for people but not necessarily for their behavior. The assertive statement is an "I" statement ("I think," "I feel," "I want"). The aggressive statement is a "you" or "you always" or "you never" statement.

   For example, an assertive statement would be something like this: "Harry, when you read the newspaper at the breakfast table, I feel very upset. I want you to put the paper down and talk to me."

   The same situation handled aggressively would be: "Harry, you're an idiot! You're a fool, just as your father was! You're both pigs and you have no manners! Put down the stupid paper! I'm talking to you!"


Assertive behavior, in a nutshell, is:
feelings → communication → action
identify them
talk "feelings" talk; express how you feel
plan what to do and do it!

Handled in a passive-aggressive manner, the statement might go something like this: "Harry... Oh, don't let me bother you, dear (sigh)...ummm...Well, I guess that old paper is really interesting...Oh, don't let me interrupt you, honey (sigh)."

The non-assertive person suffers in silence and probably, eventually either explodes aggressively or tries a passive-aggressive approach. Assertiveness, however, is based on the acceptance of one's own rights. If you accept the fact that you do have rights, then it comes down to how you will feel if you do or do not act on those rights.

Women are taught always to take care of others first. More and more, it becomes plain that in order to do that, women must take care of their own needs first; otherwise, there is nothing left for anyone else. IF WE CAN'T TAKE CARE OF OURSELVES, WE CAN'T TAKE CARE OF ANYONE ELSE.

BODY LANGUAGE

Body language is important in learning to be assertive:

1. Look the person in the eye and hold your head up.
2. Use good body posture. Take up your space and stand up straight; don't make yourself "small."
3. Use a firm tone of voice.
4. Make positive gestures (don't shake your head "no" when you want the other person to say "yes").
5. Be sure your facial expression agrees with your message (don't smile and say you are angry; look angry).
6. Watch your voice inflection. Drop your voice down at the end of a sentence; don't seem to be asking questions when you mean to make a positive statement.
7. Watch your volume. Don't speak too loudly or too softly.
8. Watch your timing (don't ask your boss for a raise when he or she just slammed a finger in a drawer).
9. Watch the content of what you say. Plan what you want to say and stick to the subject.
10. Take responsibility. Use "I" statements.

Frequently, it's hard to be assertive because (a) we aren't clear whether we are being aggressive or assertive; (b) we confuse non-assertion with politeness (non-assertion leaves us feeling ripped off; politeness has to do with consideration for others at no cost to us); (c) we are afraid of criticism or disapproval; (d) we mistake being non-assertive for being helpful (we become "rescuers" and give a kind of help that keeps the other person down); (e) we don't recognize our own rights; (f) we need more practice in being assertive; or (g) we have been aggressive in the past.

Sometimes, when a mother sees herself as the only protector--as the only source of responsibility--aggression may become a habit. People act aggressively when they feel threatened and powerless. It is usually an overreaction; the situation is rarely life threatening. For example, although there may be severe consequences for your family if you cannot make the food-stamp worker see how bad your situation is, that worker isn't going to rise out of the chair and smite you dead on the spot (although

NON-ASSERTIVE

AGGRESSIVE

you may feel like doing that to the worker!). Using assertive behavior--not aggressive behavior--will keep you cool and thinking straight. The next time you come in, you'll get a lot more respect instead of a response of "Here comes that crazy lady again!"

Sometimes we're aggressive if a present situation reminds us of a past situation that did not go well. If a social worker happens to look like your Aunt Maggie and Aunt Maggie always made you feel like 2 cents, you may want to fly off the handle at the social worker the minute it sounds as if she's getting ready to put you down. But that would be an overreaction to a past emotional experience.

Prior non-assertive behavior can also cause a person to react aggressively. For example, let's say that you once were requested by the school principal to come in to discuss your daughter's behavior. By the time you left the principal's office, you felt as if you'd been ganged up on because you just couldn't think of anything to say. The next time you got a note from the school asking you to come in, reason unspecified, you gave them both barrels before they could open their mouths. Then you found out that they wanted to tell you how much your daughter's behavior had improved.

Non-assertive behavior results in a loss of self-esteem. If you act non-assertively, your needs aren't met, because you can't ask for what you want. You may lose or fail to make close relationships. You may explode into aggressive behavior after you've been dumped on too often.

Your acting aggressively, however, will

PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE

ASSERTIVE

OFTEN RESULT IN PEOPLE BEING AGGRESSIVE TOWARD YOU and will cause feelings of guilt and embarrassment. You may lose friends or fail to establish lasting relationships. If you disregard other people's rights and needs, they will disregard yours. You may end up swinging over from being aggressive to being non-assertive (submissive).

Here are some reasons for being assertive: (a) you will INCREASE YOUR SELF-RESPECT, as well as others' respect for you; (b) you will INCREASE YOUR SELF-CONFIDENCE, as your wants and needs are more often satisfied; and (c) you will GAIN SELF-CONTROL AND PERSONAL POWER, which will help you establish and maintain close relationships.

TAKE THE RISK

To start being assertive--to change your own behavior--OBSERVE what you do and KEEP A LOG. It's good discipline because it's not easy. It means making a commitment. Saying "I'll try" means you won't do it; instead, TRY IT! Write down whether or not you think you handled a situation well. OBSERVE an effective role model (find someone who you think does handle things well, and watch how that person does it). Play "I should have said." Consider alternative responses: "What could I have done or said differently?" Imagine yourself using those responses, and choose the best one. Then practice saying or doing those things --to a mirror or to a friend. Get a friend to pretend to be the other person. Get feedback: How does your response sound to your friend? Shape the response until it feels right. Then, take a deep breath, imagine yourself doing it, and DO IT! Take the risk, but don't start with the hardest thing you can think of. Start with a situation in which you

are sure that you will succeed. KEEP TRYING--DON'T STOP!

ONLY YOU CAN CHOOSE

Sometimes the assertive thing to do is to choose not to be assertive. Only YOU are the best judge of whether or not you want to take a risk. If you are risking your life, your health, or those you love, it might be well not to be assertive. Just realize that you have a choice.

You must recognize that you may not always get everything you ask for; this is recognizing the other person's right to say no. You must then look at your alternatives: (a) YOU CAN ACCEPT the situation as it is, with no changes; (b) YOU CAN NEGOTIATE to change what you can; or (c) YOU CAN GET OUT of the situation.

There are not "ten easy steps to assertive behavior"; there is no magic wand to wave that will make you assertive forever after. It is a lifelong change process. You'll win some and you'll lose some, and some you'll go back to more than once. There is no rule that says, "If you aren't assertive right now, you will lose your turn." It's okay to go back and say, "I don't feel right about our conversation yesterday. I want to talk with you about it." It's also okay to say, "I don't know how I feel about that right this minute. I need more time to think about it. I'll let you know."

One last caution. When you change your behavior, those closest to you will also have to adjust theirs. They will probably be upset. They will probably say, "What's wrong with YOU? Why are you acting like this?" Take time to try to explain, but don't worry. Just hang in there. WHEN YOU RESPECT YOURSELF, OTHERS WILL RESPECT YOU, TOO.

# RELAXING

SIMPLE WAYS TO RELAX
(Take Time to Pause)

by Margaret Vrana
John Whitehouse

How do you relax? By going to church and singing? By taking karate classes? By going to the disco and dancing? These are all good ways to release tension.

There is something else these three things have in common. When you are doing these activities, you are using your lungs to breathe deeply. Breathing deeply is the key to relaxation. There are some very simple ways that you can relax--almost anywhere, almost anytime. On the following two pages, two parents, Jeanna and Alicia, demonstrate some simple techniques that, if practiced, can help give the word "relaxation" some new meaning.

When you take a few minutes to relax, you give yourself more strength and more power--more strength to meet daily challenges, and more power to love.

PAUSE

(Take a Moment)

Remember the good times from your childhood? These are great "treats" that you can share with your child while at the same time taking a break for a few quiet moments to relax together. As you tell your story to your child, notice the feelings you have about these special times from your past...

Then, let your child tell you a story.

You can give yourself and your child many simple treats by just taking a couple of minutes to PAUSE. Watch a sunset, sing a little song, put on some music and dance, or just find some other ways to BREATHE FULLY.

Let your child lead you around the house and show you something she or he enjoys and wants to share with you. Take a moment to notice your child--to watch her or his excitement in telling you something important. These brief moments are some of the times your child will remember when she or he grows up--they can be special for both of you.

STRETCH

1

Try a simple stretching exercise with your child. On the floor, lie down with your child facing you, sitting on your upper legs (photo #1). Bend your head up first, then curl your back up (photos #3 and #2). As your child pulls you up, she or he leans back to the floor (photo #4). Working together, you both learn and relax together.

Let lying back down be a massage for your back. SLOWLY lie back down (photos #6 and #7). Press each bone of your spine into the rug and feel the softening--the relaxing sensation. Be sure to BREATHE FULLY, letting the breath calm and soothe you.

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

(Your Back Is Important)

When you pick up your child, be good to your back at the same time. Don't strain it (photo #1)!

1 WRONG!

BEND YOUR KNEES

Bend your knees (photo #2), keeping your back straight, and bring your child close to you as you straighten up. This will help strengthen your legs as well (photo #4). Be good to your back. Even when you are changing diapers, use a dresser top or kitchen table--something high enough to allow you to do your work without constantly bending your back.

2

3

4

5

AND...

Another easy exercise that will strengthen your stomach muscles and help prevent needless injury to your back is this: Lie on your back with your arms at your sides and your knees bent (feet flat on the floor). With your hands clasped around one knee, pull this knee up to your chest and hold for a count of 10, keeping your shoulders on the floor. Relax and repeat the exercise with your other knee.

A national health survey found that approximately 5 million Americans suffer from unspecified impairment of the lower back each year. Back injuries are often the result of using your back improperly.

Here are several tips that can aid in the prevention of back injuries:

1. Use the largest, strongest, and greatest number of muscles when lifting.
2. Never lift a heavy weight when you can slide it.
3. Avoid twisting or excessive reaching.
4. Never remain in a bent position for long periods of time when the same results may be accomplished by standing erect.
5. Use a mechanical advantage by bracing yourself.

BREATHE

(Your Breath Can Calm Your Mind and Body)

Picture yourself in the hectic scene above! What can you do? Before you blow your top, get everyone else to leave the room so you can have a couple of minutes to <u>catch your breath</u>.

Now, sit down and <u>BREATHE DEEPLY</u>. Close your eyes and IMAGINE YOURSELF IN THE PARK...

WITH THE FLOWERS AND THE TREES AROUND YOU AND THE SUN SHINING WARM ON YOUR FACE, LET YOURSELF FEEL THE PEACEFULNESS OF THAT PLACE.

NOW, COME BACK TO THE PRESENT. GET UP AND <u>MAKE A FRESH START</u>!

## TAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF

Take some time for yourself--ALL ALONE --a hot bath, a long walk, 15 minutes lying on the floor listening to music--whatever you find that you enjoy. This time to yourself gives you another chance to breathe deeply, to stretch and pay attention to your whole body.

Notice where you feel pain or tension, and where your body feels good. Now, let that good feeling spread through the rest of your body as you breathe deeply and slowly...

Relaxing is an important part of every day--just as important as eating and sleeping. USE THE POWER YOU HAVE WITHIN TO MAKE YOUR LIFE EASIER AND RICHER.

# PARENTING

PARENTING: THE REWARDING CHALLENGE

by Mary Ann Bianchi

Look at your child. She or he is unique! There is no one else like your child (or you, for that matter) in the whole world. You want your child to grow into a healthy and happy adult, but in today's troubled world, that sometimes seems like an impossible wish. There is, of course, no magic formula. But if there were, we feel it would be a mixture of the "Four L's"--Loving, Living, Listening, and Learning.

To be a good parent (and everyone wants to be a good parent), we all need to learn many things. A few of these are:

1. The stages children "grow" through
2. How to help a child as she or he goes through these stages
3. How to discipline with love
4. How to take care of ourselves

The job of parenting (and it is a job) is a difficult one, but the rewards are worth the time and effort it takes. We want to give you some ideas to help you as you grow with your child along life's paths. Remember--some of the most beautiful things are seen along the trails that seem the roughest to walk. So...go with care and ENJOY THE HIKE!

YOUR CHILD IS UNIQUE AND LOOKS UP TO YOU FOR MANY IMPORTANT THINGS--
BOTH PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL

FOR THE OPEN TRAIL
SURVIVAL HINTS
BEFORE BIRTH
DON'T SMOKE
CHILD'S BRAIN + OVER ALL BODY DEVELOPING
EAT RIGHT!
SEE YOUR DOCTOR
0-6 MONTHS
CHILD: CRIES, CRIES, CRIES
SMILES AT SIGHT OF FACE
HELPLESS
HOLD + CUDDLE, TALK TO BABY
FEED WHEN HUNGRY
FRIGHTENED
CURIOUS, BY NOISES
6 MONTHS-1 YEAR
CHILD: BEGINS TO EXPLORE, DEPENDS ON YOU
SHOW LOVE, HOLD + TALK TO CHILD
LET CHILD EXPLORE
GIVE PROTECTION
FORMS BASIC FEELINGS TOWARD WORLD
1-2 YEARS
CHILD: SHORT ATTENTION
INDEPENDENT
BEGIN TO TOILET TRAIN (DON'T FORCE)
GIVE CHILD REASON FOR DISCIPLINE
TALK: EE: CHILD
CURIOUS
DEMANDS
POSSESSIVE TANTRUMS
2-3 YEARS
FEARS MOM'S LEAVING
TALK with CHILD
CHILD: MAY POKE, HIT + BITE
DON'T LOSE COOL, CHILD WILL OUTGROW THIS STAGE
LOUD CRYING BECAUSE CHILD CAN'T TELL YOU IN WORDS
3-4 YEARS
CHILD: POSSESSIVE OF PARENTS
ENJOYS SELF
TALK WITH CHILD, LET CHILD EXPLORE
ENCOURAGE CHILD TO DO THINGS FOR SELF
QUESTIONS
FEARS MONSTERS
VIVID IMAGINATION
CHILD: MAY EXCLUDE OTHERS FROM GROUP, BOSSY
LISTEN
LET CHILD TELL WILD STORIES
HELP CHILD TO SEE RIGHTS of OTHERS
MORE AGGRESSIVE
CURIOUS
4 YEARS
CHILD: SEXUAL CURIOSITY
MAY TALK CONSTANTLY!
FRIENDLY,
LISTEN to CHILD,
LET HELP WITH HOUSE HOLD TASKS,
SHOW AFFECTION
LOVING
LESS FEARFUL
REALISTIC
SERIOUS
5 YEARS
BY MARY ANN BIANCHI
DESIGN: DAVID NEWBERT

OF LIFE!!
ABILITY TO WORK
- ASSERTIVE
- GROWING
- COMMITMENT TO OWN GOALS + TO COMMUNITY
"LET GO"
ADULT
13-18
12 YEARS
11 YEARS
10 YEARS
CONTRADICTORY SOCIAL FEARS
GIVE SUPPORT BUT BE FIRM!
LOVE + LISTEN
MOODY
REVERTS TO EARLIER STAGES
HETEROSEXUAL CRUSHES
ENTHUSIASTIC OVER GENEROUS GOOD COMPANY
ENJOY
LOVE, LISTEN,
LOVES OR HATES (NO IN-BETWEEN) MANY FEARS
CHILD: RUDE, UNCOOPERATIVE
LISTEN BE COOL!
SENSITIVE
PROUD-SELFISH
SENSE OF HUMOR
CHILD: HAPPY, EASY GOING, DIRECT
PRAISE THINGS CHILD DOES, ENJOY!!
SELDOM CRIES
9 YEARS
INDEPENDENT
RESPONSIBLE
EMOTIONAL SHIFTS
ENCOURAGE INDEPENDENCE BUT SET LIMITS
LISTEN + LOVE
CRITICAL OF OTHERS
8 YEARS
SENSE OF HUMOR
OFTEN CHEERFUL
PRAISE CHILD CAN DO
LISTEN THINGS
TALKS A LOT
IMPATIENT
CRITICAL OF SELF
CHILD: JOINS ACTIVITIES HAS FRIENDS
TALK WITH CHILD ABOUT YOUR VALUES
ENCOURAGE CHILD TO FINISH WHAT SHE OR HE STARTS.
EMOTIONAL, ACTIVE, SHOWS OFF
CHILD: MOODY "THOUGHTFUL" ANXIOUS TO PLEASE
LISTEN HELP CHILD SET GOALS THAT CHILD CAN REACH
PRAISE HIM OR HER!!
SERIOUS
SETS TOO HIGH GOALS FOR SELF
LITTLE SENSE OF HUMOR
7 YEARS
6 YEARS

AS YOUR CHILD GROWS

As your child grows...

TELL and SHOW your child OFTEN (at least once a day) that you love her or him

BE AWARE that some children talk, walk, and grow at a slower rate than others do

TRY NOT TO COMPARE your child with any other child of the same age

BE AFFECTIONATE (someone has said that we all need four hugs a day)

LISTEN TO YOUR CHILD (without interrupting)

CONSULT YOUR DOCTOR if you are concerned about your child's growth --the earlier the problem is found, the easier it is to help

TELL AND SHOW YOUR CHILD THAT YOU LOVE HER OR HIM

THE SINGLE PARENT

If you are a single parent, you know that running a household by yourself and caring for young children add up to an enormous job.

Some years ago, the NUCLEAR FAMILY (two parents and their children, all living in the same house) was viewed as the only way to raise happy, healthy kids. Today we know that this view is no longer realistic. One in three marriages ends in divorce. In 1975, there were 7.2 million households (13 percent of all households) headed by women alone.

Because of the reduced finances of the single-parent family, many mothers of young children must work outside the home. In the spring of 1975, more than half of the mothers of school-age children and nearly 40 percent of the mothers with children under age 6 were either working or looking for work (U.S. Bureau of the Census). This trend is increasing. As more mothers go to work, some people have become concerned that children will be harmed by being cared for by someone other than the mother. Researchers, however, have found the following:

1. Most children develop bonds with several people. These bonds are similar to the ones made with the mother. (Children can feel secure with other adults who care.)
2. The quality of a child's family relationships, not the quantity of contact, is important (so that even if you have just a small amount of time to spend, but really pay attention to your children during that time, you will be giving a lot).
3. Working mothers who enjoy their jobs and don't feel guilty about working are just as good parents as non-working mothers.
4. Mothers who aren't working but would like to be, or working mothers who are under too much stress, sometimes have children who aren't so well adjusted. (Remember to take care of your own needs and to relax a little so that you can help your kids to do the same.)

A SINGLE MOTHER CAN HELP HER CHILDREN BY PROVIDING FATHER SUBSTITUTES

Many working mothers have found it helpful to establish a FAMILY ROUTINE with their children. These parents pick up their children at the same time after work each day (which helps make the children feel more secure). These mothers take time to let the kids know their help is regularly needed--to set the table for dinner, etc. The children feel needed and know that they are contributing to the family. After dinner, the mother spends some amount of time with the children on a regular basis (time set aside for the kids that they know is theirs). A single-parent family can be a good place for children to grow, as long as the parent is providing a SECURE home, filled with love and caring.

WHEN DADDY IS GONE

Children learn what it means to be a male or to be a female by watching the adults around them and then following these adults' example. If the father is gone from the home, the child must find someone else of the same sex to imitate. A single mother can help her children by providing "father substitutes." Grandfathers can be excellent father substitutes, as they often have the time and patience to enjoy children, knowing that they can return to a quieter setting when the visit is over. Grandfathers and grandmothers can also keep children in touch with family traditions and can share valuable stories about the past. Some other sources for children who need a father image are:

1. Uncles and nephews
2. Scout leaders
3. Community group leaders
4. Big Brothers
5. Teachers
6. Church people
7. A mother's considerate boyfriend

Studies have shown that boys tend to have a greater problem than girls do in adjusting to a fatherless home. Despite these findings, both boys and girls need substitutes for the missing parent.

One noted anthropologist suggests that every home needs two adults. The two adults need not be biological parents. In fact, they could be two sisters, a grandmother and the mother, two friends and their children, etc. The two-adult family helps:

1. Children to see that different people have different ideas.
2. Children to hear adult conversation (a mother alone might speak too often on only the child's level).
3. The mother to share the task of parenting.
4. Children to know that they are loved by more than one adult.

The more emotional support a single mother gets, the more she can help her children feel safe, secure, and loved.

There are many agencies that deal with parental absence. Parents without Partners, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, family service agencies, the YMCA and YWCA, Jewish Family Services, and local churches are all sources of support for single mothers.

Being a single parent can be a tremendous responsibility as well as a great joy. Encourage the "Four L's" (Loving, Living, Listening, and Learning) in your child's life and you will have done your part to make this world a better place in which to live.

## PARENTS AS TEACHERS

Many of us have been taught that "teacher knows best." Though teachers do have knowledge that can help you to understand your child better, don't forget that YOU are one of the most important people in your child's life. Whether your child is of preschool age or of school age, what you do with her or him at home can help support what your child learns in school.

Children learn through play. If you haven't played with your child on a regular basis, begin to do so now. If your child is painting, sit down and paint with her or him. The way you participate doesn't matter so much as the fact that YOU ARE TAKING THE TIME matters. Your child will love you for it. If you play with your child when she or he is young, chances are that your child will be more willing to talk with you and to confide in you when she or he becomes a teenager.

Below and on the following pages are some "recipes for learning" that are fun for you and your child(ren) to do together. REMEMBER THAT YOUR CHILD LOVES TO PLEASE YOU. BE POSITIVE, and make it a learning as well as a playing time. Talk with your child as you do these activities. Help your child to use her or his sense of smell, taste, etc. Encourage your child to talk as she or he works and plays.

## RECIPES FOR LEARNING

Place one set of objects (for example, a comb, pencil, fork, spoon, and block) in a bag or sock. Have the child identify the objects by feeling inside the bag while the child is blindfolded. Have the child find matching objects outside the bag and say, "This is a _____."

This activity helps the child with language and matching skills, as well as with small-muscle development.

FEELY BAG

- 1 small drawstring bag or an old sock
- 1 set of matching objects

Measure each ingredient into a small bowl. Let the child place the ingredients in a saucepan. Cook till the ingredients form a blob. Remove from the pan and cool. Knead the dough. Add food coloring and a little oil. Store the dough in a plastic bag in the refrigerator.

PLAY DOUGH

- 1 cup of salt
- 1/2 cup of cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon of vegetable oil
- 3/4 cup of water
- Food coloring
- Small bowls
- Small spoons

Finger paint with syrup on paper: Squeeze drops of food coloring on syrup and watch the designs form. You can then finger paint again. Allow the pictures to dry before hanging them. CAUTION: The syrup may drip when it gets warm. This activity is more fun to do than to save. Talk with the child about the colors, smells, tastes (YUM), and feel of this!

SYRUP PAINTING

- White corn syrup
- Food coloring in squeeze bottles
- Heavy paper or cardboard

Number each of the egg cups, 1 through 12. Have the child count the correct number of buttons or beans into each of the cups--one into #1, two into #2, etc.

This activity helps the child with counting, matching, and language skills and with small-muscle development.

EGG CARTON COUNT

- 1 egg carton
- 1 dozen buttons, dried beans, etc.

Measure all ingredients into bowls. Let the child mix all the ingredients together in a skillet over <u>low</u> heat, until everything is well blended. Stir occasionally. Use apple and orange wedges, bananas, marshmallows, or graham crackers for dippers. A fun and nutritious dessert!

PEANUT BUTTER FONDUE

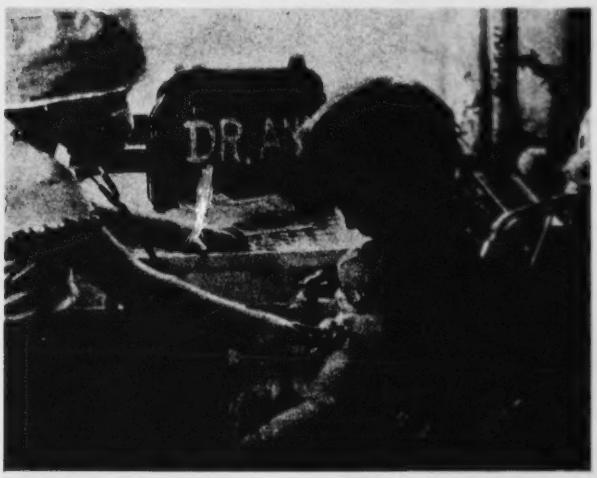
- 1/8 teaspoon of salt
- 2 cups of chunky peanut butter
- Assorted fruits for use as dippers
- 1 cup of brown sugar and 1/4 cup of margarine
- 5-oz. can of evaporated milk

Place objects in each of 5 cans (for example, a rock, rice, water, sugar, a safety pin). Place the same objects in 5 other cans (make the lids on these cans a different color). Give the child one set and you keep the other. Have the child shake 1 of her cans and then shake each of yours to find the matching sound. Continue until all the matches are made.

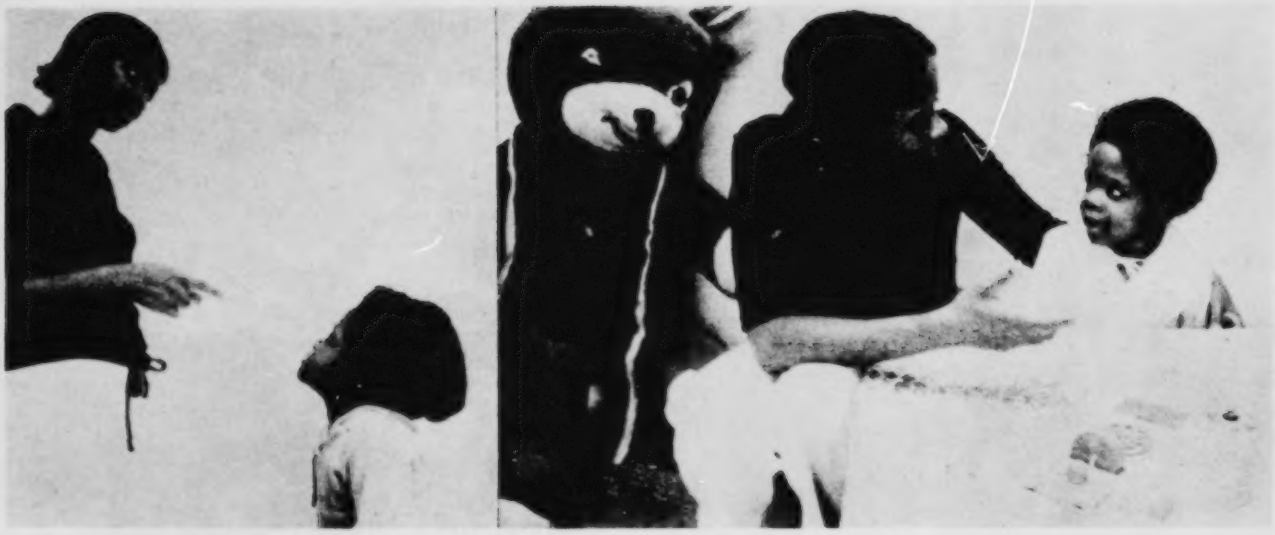
- 10 small jars (covered film cans or baby food jars)
- 1 set of matching objects

A WORD ABOUT TOYS

Remember that many of the things we teach our children will stay with them through their adult life. Let your children play with lots of different things. If children are denied toys based on the fact that they are male or female, some skills needed for later life might be missed. For example, boys as well as girls learn while playing with dolls how to care for babies and how it feels to be a dad or a mom.



THE MORE YOU LET YOUR CHILDREN CHOOSE FOR THEMSELVES NOW, WHILE THEY'RE YOUNG, THE EASIER IT WILL BE FOR THEM TO MAKE THE RIGHT DECISIONS LATER IN LIFE



WHICH WAY WOULD YOU WANT TO BE TOLD THAT YOU'D MADE A MISTAKE?

DISCIPLINE WITH LOVE

Children believe that the world and all the people in it are here to serve their needs. Remember that this attitude is not bad, but just a natural stage of development. DISCIPLINE is the act of helping a child see what happens because of her or his actions. It should be done in a positive, non-angry way. Discipline is not the same as PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT (hitting, using the belt, etc.), which usually has the negative effect of showing the child that it's okay to hit others when the child is big enough (an adult). It is easy to overpunish when you use physical punishment, because if you are angry, you may hit your child too hard. (A recent statistic showed that 85 percent of people in prison had been abused as children.) If you overpunish your child, you also run the risk of damaging the relationship between your child and you.

We firmly believe that discipline with love is the best way to deal with children. We would all agree that CHILDREN NEED LIMITS. Adults need to explain limits so that a young child learns safety, how to get along with others, and, most important of all, SELF-DISCIPLINE. For a variety of reasons, some people overdiscipline children. These people set very strict limits because they don't understand how children grow and develop. When the children fail to follow the strict rules, these adults get first frustrated, then angry. Often the child ends up being hit for something she or he does not even understand. An example might be the mother of a 6-month-old baby who is angry because she can't toilet train the child. (If she understood the child's normal development, she would know that what she's expecting is not possible for a child of this age.) The mother spanks and hits the baby for something beyond the baby's control. This child learns to fear her or his mother. In the strictest sense, this example might be considered CHILD ABUSE (willfully inflicting injury on a child). Statistics show that most child abuse is inflicted on children under the age of 3--children who are completely defenseless. In the United States, child abuse accounts for

more deaths of young children than any other factor.

CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse can be emotional as well as physical. People who say things that hurt a child's positive feelings about herself or himself could be considered emotional child abusers. People who abuse children come from all walks of life. Some are rich; others are poor. Some are parents; others are step-parents, older brothers or sisters, aunts or uncles, babysitters, or boy-friends. In short, anyone, given the proper situation, could be a potential child abuser; it is not only the mentally ill who abuse children. Ninety percent of all child abusers can be helped. Child abusers can learn new ways of dealing with their anger. They can learn to break the CYCLE OF ABUSE (most people who abuse children were themselves abused as children). If the cycle is not broken, the children of these people will most likely grow up to abuse their children, as well. And so it continues, on and on, generation after generation. The cycle must be broken.

The fact that you feel like ignoring, leaving, or hitting your child does not mean that you are a child abuser. This information is given to make you aware that child abuse is a real problem for many and a potential problem for everyone. Instead of striking your child, stop for a moment and think: "Am I going to hit my child because I'm frustrated? Because I'm under stress? Because I'm angry?"

Release your anger in a way that is not harmful--hit a pillow, take a walk, call a friend, etc.

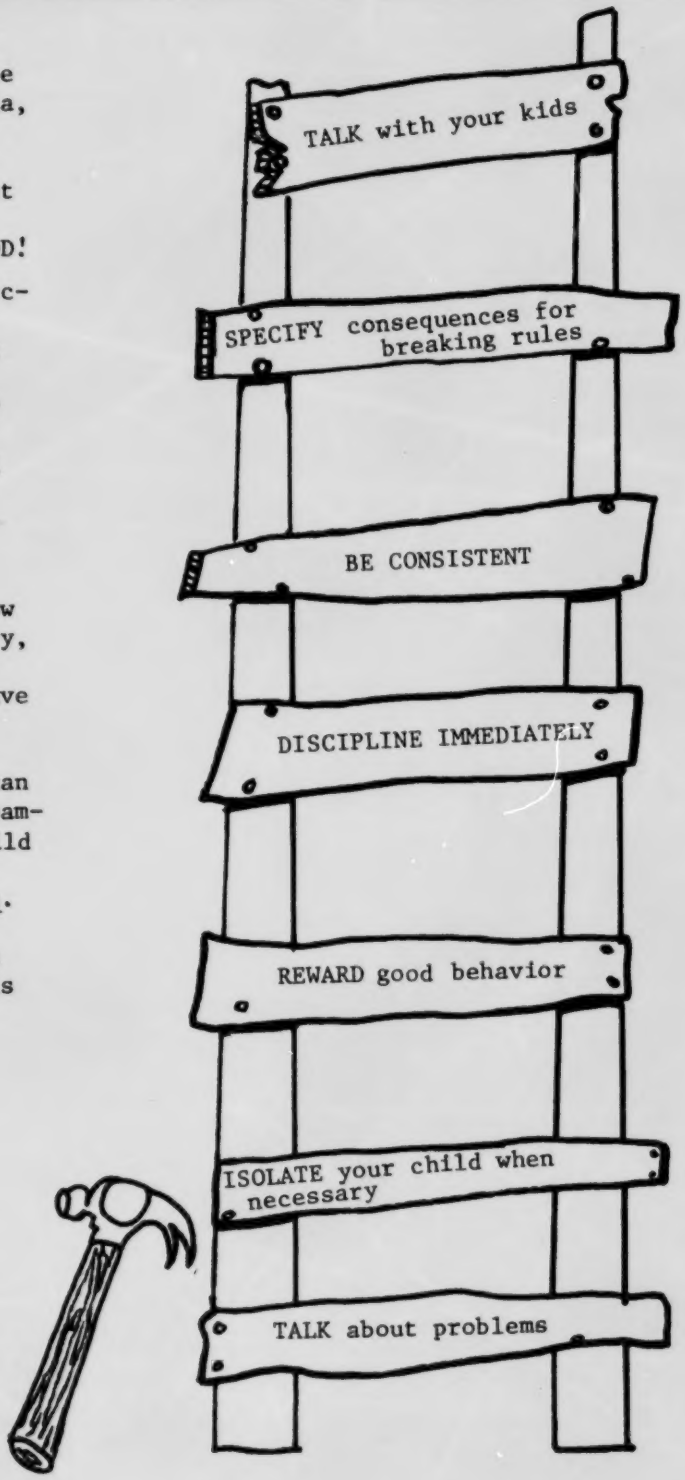
SO...

Children often misbehave because they don't know any other way to act or because they want attention. If we help our children to learn good behavior and if they know they will be rewarded for it, they won't have a need to behave badly or hurtfully. Again, we are not saying that you should never discipline your child. Children need to know the rules, and they need to know the consequences for ignoring or breaking the rules. HELP YOUR CHILD TO BE GOOD by doing these things:

1. Think about family rules (limits) that are important to you, and let the kids help set some of the rules.
2. TALK with your children to let them know why you have these rules ("Bedtime at 8:00 because bodies need rest for good health," not "Bedtime at 8:00 because I said so!").
3. Tell the child what will happen if she or he breaks a rule (stay indoors, go to her or his room, no T.V., etc.).
4. BE CONSISTENT. Don't discipline a child once for breaking a rule and then look the other way the next time the child breaks the rule. This only confuses the child.
5. If a child breaks a rule, let her or him see the CONSEQUENCES. Don't yell and scream and nag. Simply announce the rule the child has broken and apply the discipline you agreed upon earlier. ("John, you didn't pick up your toys when I asked you to. Now you will have to miss your T.V. program while you pick them up.")
6. REWARD GOOD BEHAVIOR. Be sure to tell your child that you noticed

when she or he did what she or he was supposed to do. A little praise goes a long way. ("Tania, your room looks very good. I like the way you cleaned it up without my asking.") Don't just notice the negative things. "CATCH" YOUR CHILD AT BEING GOOD!

7. Isolate the child when it is necessary to do so. There may be times when your child will just not listen to reason. First, think about whether or not your child is feeling all right. A child who is sick or tired will have a hard time being "good." If the problem is not from illness, etc., but is a temper tantrum, put the child in her or his room. Let the child know that she or he can be mad or cry, but that if the child needs to scream, etc., she or he will have to do it where the rest of the family will not be disturbed. Tell the child that she or he can rejoin the family when the screaming, etc., stops. When the child returns, give her or him a hug and talk about the problem then. We all make mistakes. Don't remind the child that she or he has been bad. Accept her or his new attitude and go on from there.



TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

Stop for a minute. Can you think of ten things that you did for yourself this week? No? Some of us find it much easier to do things for others. We even feel guilty when we take time for ourselves.

REMEMBER, we are just like baskets. If our basket is full of good feelings, we can hand out those good things to others. If no one's been filling our basket and someone asks us for support or something, it just isn't there to give.

Start to fill your basket today. The more your basket gets filled, the more you will have to give to your kids. Try some of the "basket fillers" shown below or find your own ways to feel good. YOU DESERVE IT!

One last thing. Don't isolate yourself! GET INVOLVED with other parents (P.T.A., Head Start parent groups, church, etc.). Share ideas, problems, and solutions. You'll get support from one another. Don't be embarrassed because you have a problem--we all have them.

HAVE COFFEE WITH A FRIEND
BUY SOMETHING JUST FOR YOU!
WRITE a friend
Get a babysitter & go do whatever You want--go shopping, take a bubble-bath...
Read a BOOK OR a MAGAZINE
POPULAR MECHANICS
50 GREAT IDEAS
FAMILY LEASURE CTR
Do your SECRET desire
TAKE A CRAFT CLASS
Talk with a FRIEND, ask'm to just LISTEN
You owe it to yourself and your kids to take time for yourself each week. Your kids' LOVING, LIVING, LISTENING and LEARNING starts with YOU!

# BEING POSITIVE

YOU: THE CREATOR OF SELF

by Barry Spath

I would like to share with you a few ideas about how YOU CAN FEEL GOOD ABOUT YOU. I will show you several easy exercises that are proven ways to help build a positive self-concept. Being able to accept yourself as a truly loving and beautiful person is a big step toward making the most out of your life. The following ideas and concepts have been given to thousands of people in the United States--people from many cultures, professions, life-styles, and age groups. Those people who have practiced these methods on a regular, daily basis have proven that the methods work. When practiced, these exercises can make a positive difference in your life. Therefore, once you have studied this section of the handbook, it is your responsibility to apply the information to your daily life. Only then will you know whether or not the methods work for you. If you do not use this information, it will remain just that--information untried, rather than new understanding and knowledge that will give you the opportunity to make your life what you wish it to be.

IT IS THE FEAR OF CHANGE THAT WILL MAKE YOU MAINTAIN YOURSELF WITHIN YOUR OLD HABITS, INSTEAD OF LOOKING FOR THE NEW PERSON YOU REALLY WISH TO BE

WHAT IS A SELF-CONCEPT?

Let's define "self-concept" as how we see ourselves and how we see others seeing us. As we grow up, we build our self-concept through two sources: (a) through our direct experiences and (b) through what others tell us. It is difficult to separate the two or to determine which has greater influence or is of greater importance. The first data that we receive about our self-concept come from our parents. As children, our first four years of life were the most important in creating our self-concepts and our personalities. Our parents told us that we were pretty, smart, quick to learn, etc. They also told us that we were messy, bad, or slow and that we frustrated them. Since it is difficult for most of us to remember in much detail those first four years of life, we can only examine our present attitudes to determine what effect that original influence had upon us. This fact is not mentioned to place all the blame for our present condition on our parents and our childhood environment, but it does help illustrate the important influence you have on your child's future. Once we did develop and mature, it was our responsibility to examine our lives and personalities to determine whether or not we approved of ourselves and to change if we didn't like what we saw.

CHANGE

CHANGE is the goal we are working toward. That is, however, a foreign concept to most of us. The fateful statement "Well, that's the way I am and I can't change!" is often present within us. The willingness to remain within the restrictions of our self-concept is actually pretty normal and is supported by our environment. How often do we greet our friends or relatives with "Sherry, how good it is to see you! My gosh, you haven't changed a bit!" That is a way of saying, "Do not change, or no one will recognize you," which is, of course, untrue.

Change is the natural order of our world. Look around you. Is there anything within nature that is not constantly changing? The seasons? The earth? The grass? The value of our cars? Our own age? Is there any reason that we should remain the same?

The only reason not to change is that it is comfortable to remain the same. It is easy to go to the kitchen from our bedroom. We know where everything is. We could even do it in the dark without much trouble. Can you remember the last time you moved or rearranged the furniture in your home? It's easy just to let things remain as they have been. It can be frightening to express ourselves differently, to take a step into the unknown within ourselves. You may not understand something, but if you know where you are heading, you will get there. We must hold fast to our goals!

"I CAN'T"

It is unjust to ourselves to give in to the attitude of "I can't." To hold onto "I CAN'T's" is to return to the state of the animals. Animals function from compulsion; they are unable to reason. Man and woman stepped above the state of the animals when they developed reasoning. All that reasoning really is, is the act of looking around us to discover our needs and desires, and then figuring out how to get what we want. Animals can only follow their instincts and habits. It is a habit to say "I can't." It is the fear of change that will make you maintain yourself within your old habits, instead of looking for the new person you really wish to be. Is it worthwhile to be a fully functioning happy adult? Is it worthwhile to take command of your life and have pride and confidence in yourself? Is it worthwhile to teach this to your children?

This, then, is the next step. We must begin releasing our old habits of thinking--thinking about ourselves in negative ways, thinking that we can't succeed or that we can't do that thing we really want to do.

There is within each of us one thing that we have done, thought, said, expressed, or experienced for which we have not or cannot forgive ourselves. We will call this our SECRET SIN. It can be a past mistake or an action that, when we think of it, makes us cringe or hurt inside (if we haven't already buried it so deeply inside us that we do not consciously think of it). This one secret sin within each of us can affect our daily outlook on life by not allowing us to love ourselves fully. This is not a healthy state of being. When I hate myself, how can I be good to myself and give myself those things which I need?

Take your own secret sin and write it down. I want you to read it as if you were someone else finding this scrap of paper. If your name is Sharon and you know someone casually who is named Steve, pretend that you are now Steve, reading this paper and finding out this secret about Sharon. Now, as Steve, ask yourself, "Would I really condemn Sharon for this thing she did? Would I think as poorly about her as she thinks about herself?" No, Steve most likely would not. Now, read this paper as yourself (Sharon) again. This time, read the paper as if you (Sharon) had just found this secret about Steve. Can you see the secret sin growing smaller? Can you see how senseless it has been for Steve to worry so much about this thing for such a long time? If you have been honest with yourself, you will now see this secret sin in its true light. Can you give YOURSELF as much understanding and love as you just gave a casual acquaintance a minute ago? Why on earth can we be so merciful and so full of compassion for our children, our friends, and others, yet hate ourselves?

This is a simple method of seeing yourself in a truer light, but you are not through yet. You have held onto this thought for so long that it has become part of you. It is an everyday expression about yourself to yourself. It will take an everyday effort to release it and replace it with something new. If you were honest with yourself in the previous exercise, you should have felt a release, as if a burden had been taken from your shoulders. It will return tomorrow if you do not reinforce to yourself that those negative feelings about yourself--your secret sin--are no longer a part of you.

TAKE THIS "SECRET SIN" AND WRITE IT DOWN

TEAR IT UP AND THROW IT AWAY

Perform this exercise every day, until there are no longer any uncomfortable feelings associated with it. It takes a little effort, but aren't you worth the time and trouble? Each day, after you have written down your secret and have looked at it from three different views, tear it up and throw it away. Release it from your thoughts and replace it with the idea about yourself that you really want.

You can use this technique with any thought or opinion that you want to release. Once I had a trailer that I wished to sell. I wanted $3,000 for it. I did not believe that anyone would pay that much for it. Once I realized that I actually had within me the negative thought that no one would pay that much for the trailer, I began listening to my voice and watching my actions. I didn't sound or act enthusiastic about the trailer when I was talking to potential buyers, because I didn't believe anyone would pay $3,000 for it. I saw that this disbelief (negative thought) was affecting my daily life and limiting me and my goals. I reasoned that my goal was to sell the trailer for $3,000, yet I saw that I didn't have any purpose for the money--no real need or goal. I now could see a large part of the problem: the motivation was not present; the goal was shallow. I then started to develop a meaningful goal and purpose for the $3,000: I planned to use the money to finance a long-awaited move to Chicago. This made me grow more excited about the fact that I had within my means the way to satisfy my unfulfilled desire to move to Chicago. I then wrote down every morning the following: "I do not believe that anyone is going to pay $3,000 for my trailer." Then I tore this up and wrote down the reasons for which I needed the $3,000. Within two days, I had a check for the full amount.

The disbelief I had about the $3,000 had only been with me a short time, so the method worked very quickly. With other thoughts I have had for longer periods of time, it has taken me more time to release and replace them. The thought must first be RELEASED and then REPLACED with a new goal and a new purpose determined for that new goal. Then, watch it work.

Change involves acceptance of where we are at the moment. The key to any growth is our realization that we are at one place, trying to get to another. In order to determine the best route, we must know not only the destination, but the origin as well. Each of us is an individual. We breathe, eat, sleep, love, and sweat. Whether I am the President of the United States or the last in the unemployment line, I exist. It is the duty of each and every one of us to do the best with what we have to develop ourselves, FIRST. How can I give to those with whom I am close if all I have to give them are my insecurities and limitations? Our one responsibility is to improve ourselves. The rest will follow. This is not at the expense of others, but for the benefit of all.

What are the most memorable events of your childhood? Were they those special times of sharing love and respect with your parents, or were they the injuries to your body and mind? If there is respect for mistakes, then all our memories and the learning that came from them will be positive. To look at the present as being the result of the past can be used or misused, depending upon your outlook.

MISTAKES

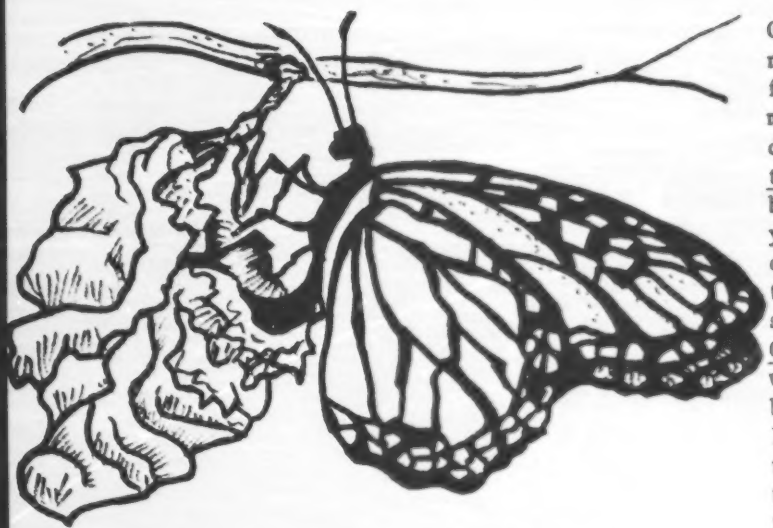
Mistakes are only tools for us to use to learn and grow with. Whenever we are in a learning situation (and I can't think of any hour of any day when we are not learning something), we are making mistakes or we are reinforcing positive actions. Let's use learning a new sport as an example. The instructor explains how to throw a football. We take in the visual image and then repeat it to the best of our ability. Next the instructor tells us the mistakes that were made in technique, etc., and we follow the same process--usually improving the throw's distance or accuracy. It is up to us to remember the corrections or to return to our first attempt and repeat the mistakes. This is a simple matter of learning from our experience. When there is no threat to our self-concept attached to a learning experience, we accept mistakes and correct them as needed. Unfortunately, many learning situations do cause us great anxiety if we are worried about failure. For example, if there is an unpopular child in the class who is smaller than normal and perhaps awkward and uncoordinated, that child will probably be worried constantly about making mistakes because she or he knows that the other kids will tease--call the child stupid. At this point, the child is paying more attention to what the other kids will (might) say than she or he is to the mistakes she or he is making. It is difficult to learn from your mistakes if you are not aware of them enough to try to correct them, due to too much worry about what others are thinking about you.

THEN SAY, "I LOVE YOU JUST BECAUSE YOU ARE," AND MEAN IT

To which do you pay more attention? Do you worry about what others will say if you make a mistake, or do you take the time to examine your mistakes to see the progress and growth they can bring? If you give your undivided attention to what you are doing, you WILL learn from your mistakes and probably will not have to repeat them. If you are giving all your attention to what others might say, without giving any attention to what you are doing, you will make many more mistakes and will not learn or grow from them. Put your full attention on what you are doing and you will make fewer mistakes. The mistakes you do make you will learn from. Your life will take on much more meaning. Mistakes will begin to be your stepping-stones to the future, instead of stumbling blocks from your past.

GIVE TO YOURSELF

You can now begin to give to yourself the love and respect so essential to a healthy self-concept. Every morning and every night, look into the mirror of your bathroom or bedroom. With the door closed and no one else listening, look into your eyes and appreciate something about yourself: the clearness of the color of your eyes; the smile you gave someone during the day; or the discipline you gave your child from the standpoint of love, not frustration. Then say, "I love you just because you are," and mean it. Say this out loud. Do not think about the mistakes of the day, for you have already made them positive by learning from them. Do not give any attention at this time to any of the goals that



are yet unreached, for you will reach them tomorrow or the next time you have the opportunity to change something within yourself. Give attention only to this moment. Study that person you see reflected in the mirror. Give your undivided attention to the good that you have within you, right now. If you apply this on a daily basis, you will discover the joy and excitement of hard work and easy play. You <u>will</u> become that positive, confident person you want to be.

SO?

Once again, if you read this and do nothing with it, it will just be information. If you take this information and <u>use it</u>, on a daily disciplined basis, <u>YOU WILL become the director of your life</u>. <u>YOU WILL</u> become anything and everything that you truly desire. Life will not be a constant hassle. This information and these exercises are <u>tools</u> for your consideration. Try them out. <u>USE THEM</u>. <u>Only</u> after you've used these tools will you know whether or not they are beneficial for you. I have tried them. I have seen hundreds of others use these tools and, through them, reach their goals, find happiness, and attain the positive self-image for which they strived.

The information is now yours. Do with it what you will. I send you my circle of love--just because you are.

# SEXUALITY

## YOUR BODY AND YOUR MIND

by Marian Williams
David Bones

Most people use the word "sex" to mean sexual intercourse between persons of the opposite sex. Sex can also mean female or male, i.e., "What sex are you?" (the two sexes). A broader term than sex is "sexuality." "HUMAN SEXUALITY" is that part of our personality which causes each person to function as a male or a female and includes our feelings about our bodies, ourselves, and our interaction with other people --male and female. This section of the handbook will discuss briefly some of the many parts that, when put together, constitute HUMAN SEXUALITY.

Little children ask, "Where did I come from? How did I get born?" Lots of stories have been made up about birth and sex. Usually, the true story of babies and sex is not told; yet all of us got here in the same way--our parents shared a sexual experience and here we are. As I (Marian Williams) write, I am reminded of the story that was told to me when my youngest brother was born (I was 11 at the time). My brother was born at home during the night. I arose one morning to find a new little baby boy in my house. My oldest sister, who was 11 years older than I, informed

LITTLE CHILDREN ASK, "WHERE DID I COME FROM? HOW DID I GET BORN?" SEX EDUCATION BEGINS WHEN YOUR CHILDREN ARE BORN, NOT WHEN THEY REACH PUBERTY

me, in answer to my question, that the doctor had brought the baby in his black bag. When I shared this explanation with my friends later that day, I was laughed right off the playground. They began to explain to me where babies come from. Oh! What a shock that was! I did not ask any more questions of my sister or mother. It was evident to me that I was not supposed to know. So I didn't ask questions. A lot was left to my imagination.

PARENTS AS TEACHERS

Sex education begins when your children are born, not when they reach puberty (early adolescence). Developing a healthy attitude toward our sexuality is not something we do automatically. Having a healthy attitude is the result of having a parent(s) who creates an atmosphere of openness about physical expression (the body, affection, etc.), as well as about more specific sexual matters. However, most parents overreact to their children's nudity (exploration), masturbation, and first occasional use of obscene language; they often instill very early in the child's mind the idea that anything having to do with the child's own body (sexuality) is somehow bad or "dirty."

If they think of their sexuality as dirty, they will have a much more difficult time managing it in healthy and responsible ways.

There are two popular notions about sex and what children should know about it: (a) "The less they know, the better"; and (b) "They will learn soon enough". The problem is that children often learn too little, too late. What children pick up from their friends in the locker room or the back of the school bus is often so twisted and filled with vulgarity (and often completely inaccurate) that developing a healthy understanding and attitude about their own sexuality is next to impossible.

I am aware that, because there are so many diverse family cultures, it is difficult to give information or guidelines that all parents will feel comfortable using in the sex education of their children. As the mother of seven children (five male, two female), ages 14 to 25, I know that my attitudes about sex were shaped by my upbringing. I was raised in a very religious home. Sex was not discussed, as I mentioned earlier concerning my younger brother's birth. As a result, there was much for me to learn as a parent. A lot of the information I had picked up was closer to myth or outright misinformation than to reality. As I recall, my husband gave the first "facts of life" talk to our oldest son when our son entered junior high. At that time, I was too embarrassed even to stay in the room with them after the talk began.

I started working for Planned Parenthood not long after that episode and found out how important it was that I be comfortable with my own sexuality (humanness) before I could be helpful to others--be they patients at the clinic or my own children. During the first sexuality workshop I attended, I left right in the middle, so uncomfortable was I with myself and the information being presented.

I'm sharing this brief story about myself to make a point. We are all basically the same, regardless of cultural differences. We have the same needs, emotional and physical, and usually the same anxieties. The growth we experience in understanding our own sexuality (humanness) is a valuable addition to our total life and to the lives of those dear to us.

SEX IS NOT A FOUR-LETTER WORD

So where do you start talking with your child about sex? The subject of nudity in the bath and bathroom can provide a

healthy introduction to sexual differences and sexuality. A child will let her or his parent(s) know when modesty dictates by closing the door or by asking to bathe alone. By the same token, adults have a right to their own privacy. Most children can accept the fact that their parents want to be alone sometimes.

## CORRECT LANGUAGE

Giving children the correct names for parts and functions of the body is important. It is just as easy for you to teach a little boy to say "penis" as to say "wee wee" or for you to teach a little girl to say "vagina" as to say "twat" or "my little girl." If a young child repeats an obscenity that she or he heard at school or on the playground, you should explain what the word means without your being afraid to use the word (or fainting or overreacting, etc.). This kind of direct approach has several advantages. First, your child will learn that she or he can't use the obscenity as a weapon against you--to shock you, to gain attention, to make you upset, etc. Second, your child will realize that no question or topic that she or he brings up will make you uncomfortable. Third, by explaining the word using its proper terminology, you will be treating the subject of sex with respect, instead of lowering it to the level of the streets.

My middle son came in one day and exclaimed, "I hurt my balls!" I asked him to repeat what he'd said. Then, after some conversation (and recuperation on his part), I said, "Let's get the dictionary and look up some words." The words we looked up were "testicles" and "balls." We then talked about which words were appropriate and which were not. I also explained that some words were offensive to others.

## PUBERTY

A recent study ("Parents' Sexual Silence," Psychology Today, January 1979) showed that among 9- to 11-year-old girls (most of whom would be menstruating within a few years), nearly 40 percent had never had a parent so much as introduce the topic of their "period." Less than 1 percent of the mothers and less than 2 percent of the fathers had ever discussed "wet dreams" with their children.

Although most of the parents involved in this study appeared to be strangely silent in talking with their children about physical differences, many parents do want to be their child's sex educator(s). Such parents want to know and understand puberty.

Webster's defines "puberty" as the time "when sexual reproduction first becomes possible." As the body develops, a series of actions within the body starts to occur at a rapid pace. "Little boys" become capable of causing pregnancy, and "little girls" become able to conceive. During this stage of body growth, a boy's testicles change from being organs that produce no sperm to being organs that produce a lot of sperm. Likewise, a girl's ovaries change from being organs that do not produce eggs to being organs that release eggs on a regular cycle. Depending upon the sex of the individual, these changes occur at different ages. For girls, the changes usually occur a bit earlier--between ages 10 and 16. For boys, the changes usually occur between ages 12 and 18. These changes are dramatically signaled when the girl has her first menstrual period and the boy has his first sperm emission (ejaculation, "wet dream"). There are also secondary sexual characteristics. There are additional clues to puberty which usually occur about a year before menstruation or ejaculation occurs.

Adolescents often become very aware of their bodies and sometimes feel embarrassed when their bodies look slightly misshapen. One breast may seem smaller, one testicle may seem a bit larger, one ear may stick out differently, etc. It can be very helpful for a young person who is going through puberty to know that all bodies are not perfect--that, in a sense, it's "normal" to be a bit "abnormal." This can be reassuring news to a self-conscious adolescent.

With all these body surprises happening so fast, and seemingly all at once, it is not surprising that young people experience puberty as a time of joy and agony, excitement and frustration, pleasure and pain. Their glands are making rapid changes, while at the same time their central nervous systems are working overtime, learning how to coordinate this "new" body. Meanwhile, the body seems to be lurching about, often in a clumsy fashion. Emotions change abruptly. At one moment, life seems to be filled with new love, while at the next moment, life seems to be agonizingly lonely. Someone who is a star one day falls on her or his face the next day.

What can you do to get through your adolescent's "crazy" time? Become knowledgeable--remember that it is important to talk with your children before and during body development, rather than waiting for the aftershock. AVOID USING GUILT and avoid teaching your children taboos. BACK OFF--many parents find it useful to give some room to their children. BE AWARE of using words such as "normal," "abnormal," "always," and "never." Like the words "should" and "must," these words are judgmental and often ineffective. ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD to talk with an adult who is well informed (a friend, a doctor, or a Planned Parenthood staff member, for example) if it is difficult for you to discuss sexuality issues with your child. But try talking to your child yourself. You will get over your initial embarrassment very quickly.



Puberty is an extremely stressful and emotional time, but almost everybody lives through it. It can help both you and your children just to remember that for a while it will be a crazy time!

## FEELINGS AND FANTASIES

Sometimes parents want to know how to keep their children from having "dirty" thought. This worry suggests that certain thoughts are "evil," while other thoughts are "good." Thoughts are neither appropriate nor inappropriate, dirty nor clean--they are just a fact of human life. They need be neither morally approved nor disapproved--they just are.

Having thoughts and fantasies about other people as warm, special loves or as sexual partners is not strange, bizarre, "evil," or "dirty." Most little boys fall in love several times during their childhood with more than one older woman. In the same way, most little girls fall in love several times with more than one older man. Truthfully, these feelings, wishes, and impulses continue to occur in all of us throughout our lives. They do not go away as we get older. People who have healthy attitudes accept their fantasies, feelings, and thoughts for what they are--imaginative fiction and nothing more. You might call it the mind's way of going out for a joy ride. Such "trips" (thoughts, dreams, wishes) are harmless in and of themselves.

Of course, there are those people who use dreams, visions, and feelings as an excuse for their behavior. They say "I couldn't help it!" or "The devil made me do it!" Obviously, such people avoid owning up to their behavior and don't take personal responsibility for their actions. Just because thoughts or feelings are filled with anger or rage does not force a person to hurt another phys-

ically; just because fantasies or dreams are filled with lust and erotic notions does not give one person the right to force another into having sex. People who excuse their behavior on the grounds of intense feelings, saying "I had to do it," are not yet grown up. They may need help.

It seems important for parents to help their children distinguish between behavior and thoughts or feelings. Dreams, fantasies, wishes, thoughts, etc., are personal and private matters that are neither "good" nor "bad," nor morally "right" nor "wrong." Behavior, however, is a social matter and is judged according to how one person's actions affect another's rights. Some behavior is judged acceptable; some is not. You can think anything you want, but you cannot do anything you want.

LOVE/MAKING IT/MAKING BABIES

Romeo and Juliet were early teenage lovers. We know that, in the past, such adolescent behavior as theirs was more acceptable than it is now. Scholars have shown that many societies declared children to be adults at the age of puberty. A thirteenth-century German code gave permission for males of age 14 and females of age 12 to marry without parental consent. Today, however, we ask youth to postpone sexual fulfillment and to live up to the generally accepted moral persuasion that such behavior belongs only within marital bounds.

A recent study at the Alan Guttmacher Institute suggests that many young persons do not in fact follow the traditional moral codes. Additional data estimate that more than 4 million females aged 15 to 19 and more than 7 million males aged 15 to 19 are sexually active. One out of every four of these sexually active females becomes pregnant.

There is wide agreement that such teenage (and pre-teenage) pregnancies are not only unwise, but unhealthy as well. Parents, however, do not agree on how to deal with teenage sexual behavior. Parents feel caught in a double bind and often ask, "If I talk with my son or daughter about birth control, won't that be giving my child permission to go out and have sex?" Parents are aware of the risks in this "Catch 22" situation that must be handled. As Sol Gordon and Irving Dickman point out:

> In this situation you will have to weigh two off-setting risks... The risk that giving information will be misconstrued [and misinterpreted] as giving permission, etc., against the risk [if you withhold the facts] of pregnancy and venereal disease [V.D.].

When you talk with your children about contraception and sex, you will surely want to know more than this brief section can provide. (Planned Parenthood has free and comprehensive literature covering nearly every aspect of sexuality.) If your child is sexually active, the issue of birth control is important to consider. In addition to sharing that kind of information with your child, you will probably also want to share your values. If you have developed a good communicative relationship with your child (see the parenting section of this handbook), such discussions won't be a problem. As you talk with teenagers, it is suggested that (a) you not be angry, accusative, threatening, or judgmental (these attitudes tend to cause separation between you and your son or daughter), and (b) you give the young person permission to express her or his opinion, too.

You might try saying something like this: "I think you should know about the different methods of birth control,

although I think you are too young to be having intercourse--I still think that is for marriage. I know that a lot of young people are having sex these days, but I hope that you can be different from them and say no if that is your choice."

Teenagers expect parents to have opinions; they need and want to hear how you think and feel about these crucial concerns. Even so, they may choose to think and act differently from the way in which you think and act.

Consult your physician or the local health clinic for more detailed advice and for publications about specific topics. (The free CONSUMER INFORMATION CATALOG has some very good materials, including a pamphlet entitled "The Hassles of Becoming a Teenage Parent"; write to the CONSUMER INFORMATION CENTER, PUEBLO, COLORADO 81009.)

YOUR BODY, YOUR MIND, YOUR CHOICE

Well that winds up this section on your body and your mind. We've talked over some of the important things about sex (but not all of them). If you have a friend you trust, you can ask questions about these things as well as about other things that have to do with sex, your sexual feelings, sex education, etc.

Human sexuality is no longer a taboo subject in our society. In the past 10 years, we have observed a revolution concerning sexual attitudes and behavior. Sex is a part of everyone's life...like eating and going to the bathroom...like being tired and sleeping...like being happy or being sad. You can have good sexual feelings when another man or woman touches or hugs or kisses you. It is good to touch, hug, or kiss another man or woman if both of you care about each other and both of you want to touch, hug, or kiss. Men and women can be good friends forever and never touch or hug or kiss. Not all men or women want to make love. Not all men or women want to have children. Not all men or all women want to be married. You may choose to make love, have children, or get married--or you may choose not to.

As a woman, you're lucky--luckier than any other women who've ever lived. Before you, women's choices were limited to having babies or not marrying. Before you, women and children were property. Before you, women who had babies often died young. Now, you have the choice of a dozen kinds of methods of contraception; of working at a job/career or being a homemaker; of having a child; or of deciding on a combination of all of these.

CHOICES--hundreds of them, thousands of them--choices about your life and your health. You'll make better choices if you know as much about them as possible. But remember this, regarding your body: you do have a choice.

# LAW/YOUR RIGHTS

THE LAW AND THE SINGLE MOTHER

by Tim Sindelar

The other sections of this handbook have dealt with problems that you yourself can often solve directly on your own--either through the development of self-discipline or through the use of the inner strength you possess. There are times, though, when being ASSERTIVE, RELAXED, or POSITIVE is just not enough. You need help and support from others skilled in dealing with that one problem that seems to have stopped you dead in your tracks. Some person or some group is stomping on your rights--and winning. Where do you turn for legal advice? What rights do you have regarding HOUSING, CREDIT, EMPLOYMENT, WELFARE, etc.?

HOW AND WHERE

Traditionally, legal services were only available to those who could afford them--in other words, those of middle or high income. Fortunately, the delivery of legal services in this country has and is undergoing rapid change. Increasingly, the law is being opened up to those with lower incomes. The development of legal clinics offering low-cost legal services and the growth of legal services organizations have contributed to the ability of all persons to achieve justice before the law.

"SORRY, MA'AM, OVER THE PHONE I MUSTA FORGOT TO TELL YOU--
WE JUST RENTED THIS PLACE"

If you consult private counsel, you can expect legal fees varying from $25 to $60 per hour or, in the case of legal clinics, a flat rate for certain services. If your income is near the level of the maximum Welfare grant in your area, you may qualify for free legal services through a legal aid program (check your telephone directory for "Legal Services" or "Legal Aid"). The following is a list of potential legal services that you should consult if you need an attorney to handle your problems:

1. Local legal aid offices
2. Lawyer-referral services (referrals to private attorneys who may or may not charge less than the standard fees)
3. The local or state chapters of the National Organization for Women (NOW)
4. State or municipal Commissions on the Status of Women (these agencies may be able to refer you to sympathetic lawyers and may be able to provide legal assistance in certain areas such as employment, education, or other women's rights

HOUSING

Single mothers are often confronted with the problem of discrimination in housing. Landlords may be reluctant to rent to single mothers for a variety of reasons. Unfortunately, the law may or may not be of much assistance in this matter. In many states, discrimination on the basis of sex is STILL allowed. If your state does not have a specific remedy, it may still be possible to seek some protection under a federal statute. It is advised that you consult your local legal aid office or the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) office in connection with housing discrimination complaints.

Even if you are able to rent a house, many times you will find that the dwelling does not meet minimum housing standards. It may be dilapidated, windows may be broken, the heat may not work, or the plumbing may be backed up. There is recourse available for these problems. Again, it is advised that you contact the local legal aid office or the local tenants rights association. These organizations can help you sue your landlord to correct the conditions of your housing. In many states, if your housing fails to meet the minimum housing codes, it may be possible for you to withhold part of your rent to apply to repairs. Of course, before you take such action, you should notify your landlord in writing. Always try to communicate with your landlord in writing, and always retain copies of your letters. These may become useful in later legal proceedings.

You may also desire to check into the possibility of public housing. Public housing is under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This kind of housing is run on the local level by housing authorities. The housing authorities have established guidelines to determine eligibility for public housing. HUD requires that the local housing authorities do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, national origin, or sex.

When you apply for public housing, certain information will be asked of you. It would be helpful to bring with you (a) birth certificates for all your children; (b) income verification, such as paystubs or a letter from your employer; (c) information regarding any medical problems you or your family may have; and (d) rent receipts from your landlord.

Under the present guidelines, public housing rent cannot exceed 25 percent of your income. You may not be evicted

from public housing unless you violate the terms of the lease or unless there is good cause. If an attempt is made to evict you from public housing, you must receive notice of this action in writing. You have the right to request a hearing, and it is illegal for you to be evicted without a hearing.

CREDIT

Discrimination against women by financial institutions has, in the past, taken many forms. The first aspect of discrimination has been the idea that a married woman has no credit in her own name unless she is the sole or major source of support for the family. A woman's credit rating is usually tied with her husband's, and it has been difficult for a woman to establish credit of her own. In addition, many credit institutions have discriminated against women in the awarding of loans. This kind of discrimination is now prohibited by federal law. If you feel that, because of your sex, you have been discriminated against in an application for credit, you should contact the legal sources mentioned earlier. Financial institutions can be censured and severely fined for failure to comply with statutes governing equal opportunity in lending.

There are also new laws that protect the consumer who uses credit. Actual interest rates, hidden costs, warranty periods, or the lack thereof are some of the subjects that you, as a consumer, should be fully aware of.

CREDIT USUALLY COSTS. Make sure you know what the price tag is!

JOB DISCRIMINATION

Job discrimination on the basis of race, religion, national origin, or sex is illegal. If you feel that an employer has discriminated against you on the basis of your sex, you should take the following actions:

1. Contact the local office of the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC). You may find this by looking in the white pages of the telephone directory under "Federal Offices." The EEOC will assist you in filing a complaint against the employer who took the discriminatory action. In addition, the EEOC may direct you to a state or local agency that will look into your claim.
2. After the EEOC has investigated your claim, they may advise you that your claim is valid and issue a "right to sue" letter. If you receive such a letter, contact a lawyer immediately. An attorney can assist you at this point in bringing an action in Federal court to force the employer to remedy the discriminatory practices.

The forms of sex discrimination are varied and sometimes quite subtle. If it appears to you that men are being paid higher wages for work that is also performed by women, you are perhaps being discriminated against. If men receive different benefits (such as employee insurance plans or retirement payments or vacation pay) than women, you may be subject to a discriminatory practice. If your company treats unmarried fathers differently from the way it treats unmarried mothers, this may be a discriminatory policy. If at any time you feel that you as a woman are being treated differently from the way men are being treated, you should report this action to the local EEOC office for investigation.

If you are the victim of a discriminatory job practice, you may be entitled to various forms of relief. The court may

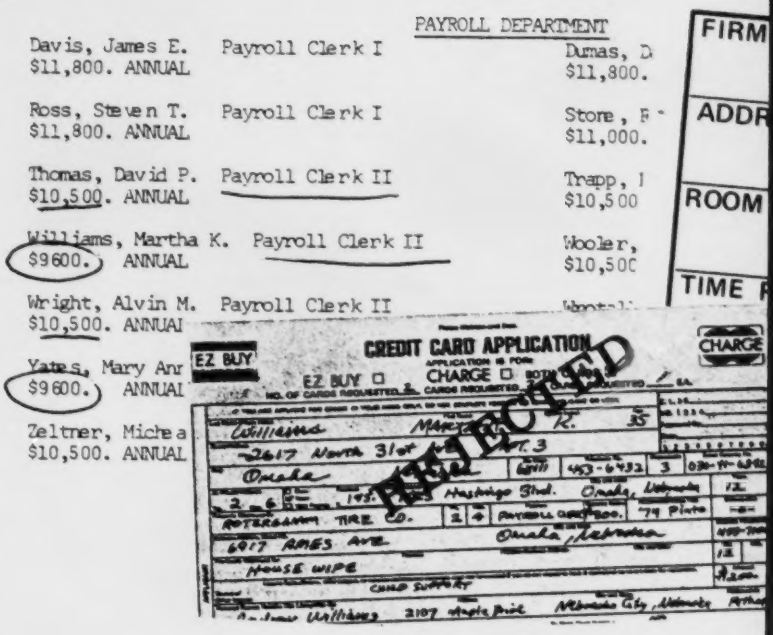
order that you be hired in the position that you applied for and were denied. It may also order that you be trained for the position or that you be allowed equal benefits. You may be awarded back pay. In addition, attorney's fees may be awarded to your attorneys for bringing the action if you are successful.

WELFARE RIGHTS

WELFARE IS NOT A HANDOUT, BUT A RIGHT. For single mothers, Welfare sometimes is the key to their survival. It may be a meager key, but it does provide some assistance in need.

The principal Welfare program that single mothers may be concerned with is AFDC--Aid to Families with Dependent Children. This program is run by the individual states; however, half of the financing comes from the federal government. The federal government provides guidelines and restrictions on eligibility and procedures. To be eligible for AFDC, you must be pregnant or have at least one child. You must live with and take care of the child, and your husband (or the child's father) must be either unable or unwilling to support the child. In addition, your income must be within certain guidelines; these guidelines vary from state to state.

There are several important things to remember about your Welfare rights. First, you must be allowed to apply for Welfare. Generally, your application must be acted upon within 45 days. If your application for Welfare is denied, you must be given in writing the reasons for the denial. You may appeal the denial or any action taken by the Welfare authorities in connection with your case. There is some controversy as to whether you can be denied Welfare if you refuse to give the name of the father of your children.




EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK
EQUAL CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES

You cannot be forced to sue your husband as a condition of getting on Welfare. If your husband is under court order to be making payments for child support, but is not paying, the Welfare organization itself may sue him in court; however, they cannot require you to sue your husband first. If you are currently receiving child-support payments from your husband, these payments will be taken into account in determining your income and will affect the amount of support that you receive from Welfare. If you remarry, your children are still entitled to AFDC because a husband is required by law to support his wife, but not her children through a previous relationship.

You may also be able to receive food stamps. If you are eligible for any other type of Welfare assistance, you are automatically eligible for food stamps. Be sure to ask for food stamps. Your income will determine how much you

pay for the stamps. If you are denied food stamps, or if the amount you pay is increased, you can request a hearing. You should be informed of this right to a hearing at the time you apply for the food stamps.

If you have any problems receiving Welfare benefits, you should contact the local legal aid office. In addition, you should contact the National Welfare Rights Organization at 1420 N Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005. This organization will assist you in securing your rights and will provide you with the name and address of a local Welfare Rights Organization. Don't hesitate to assert your Welfare rights. Remember, it is a right, not a privilege.

DIVORCE

In most states today, divorce or dissolution of marriage is available on a no-fault basis. What this means is that a party no longer has to come into court alleging physical or mental cruelty, desertion, adultery, or any of the various grounds that were formerly required for divorce. Persons seeking a divorce simply have to state that it is their belief that the marriage is irreconcilably broken and that future efforts at reconciliation would be useless--in other words, that the marriage can't work and no effort can be made to make it work.

If you are thinking about seeking a divorce, you should be aware of your rights under the law. In all states, provisions are made for support of the separated woman and her children while the divorce is pending. This is usually considered temporary support. Procedures vary from state to state but are somewhat as follows:

1. Your attorney files a petition seeking a divorce or dissolution of a marriage.
2. Your attorney then asks for a hearing on the question of temporary support. You are required to complete a financial affidavit stating your assets and your liabilities and indicating your average monthly expenses. The other party, your husband, usually files his own affidavit.
3. A hearing is then held in court. The court at that time determines the proper amount of support needed during the period of the divorce proceedings. In most states, there is a waiting period between the filing of the initial petition for divorce and the granting of the final decree. The length of the period will vary from state to state. An average waiting period is 60 days. During that time, you should be receiving temporary support payments as ordered by the court. If you do not receive your payments, your attorney can take action to assure that payment will be made--assuming that your husband is able to work and make such payments.

The major stumbling block in most divorce actions today is the property settlement. This is the final division of all property that you and your husband jointly acquired during your marriage. Generally, the rule is that you should have a right to approximately half of the income and property acquired during the course of the marriage. Of course, this will vary from situation to situation. The law tends to favor women in this situation most of the time.

You should start thinking about the property settlement immediately upon separation from your husband. It would be to your advantage to put aside certain property that you intend to retain. It is not unusual for husbands to hide or liquidate property in the hope of

avoiding an "unfair to them" property settlement. The court may order that your husband be restrained from disposing of any property acquired during the marriage. However, it is in your best interest to take any steps necessary to protect what property there is.

In addition to a property settlement, alimony may be allowed in the final divorce decree. As a general rule, alimony is only awarded when the marriage has been of some duration--at least 5 to 7 years. This rule has many exceptions, the most notable of which occurs when a wife works to put her husband through school. In such a case, the courts agree that the woman should be compensated for the labor and expenses she went through to put her husband in a position in which he could earn a high income. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU TRY TO SECURE AS MUCH IN YOUR PROPERTY SETTLEMENT AND ALIMONY AGREEMENT AS POSSIBLE, SINCE IT BECOMES SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT TO CHANGE THESE FIGURES AT A LATER DATE.

The areas we have covered in this section are complex. The information shared is to help give you an idea of some of your rights under the law. It is not our intent in this brief space to solve or answer all your legal problems or questions.

SO?

This entire resource handbook was designed to be just that--a RESOURCE, something you will use and refer to as a tool. The information contained in this handbook is valuable, but like anything of value, its worth is only meaningful for those who choose to see it (or use it). We hope you do.

## The Writers

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## Match the Photos with the Right Persons

(answers on next page)

BARRY SPATH: Presently director of School of Metaphysics for Chicago, Illinois. B.A. in psychology. Graduate study in guidance and counseling. Guest lecturer for University of Nebraska at Omaha, Psychology Department. Former high school teacher, special education specialist.

TIM SINDELAR: Graduated from University of Nebraska at Lincoln, College of Law. Taught law at Boston College (of Law). Has own practice in Omaha--Smith, Sindelar, Smith & Gooch. Engaged in general practice of law, with emphasis on civil rights, discrimination, domestic relations, and criminal justice.

JOHN WHITEHOUSE: Currently working for Homestead Institute for Creative Living (founder). John is a student of many different life-styles and has studied various traditions of therapy and meditation. He has an M.A. in anthropology and currently does counseling and psychotherapy in the Omaha and Lincoln areas.

MARIAN WILLIAMS: Has worked for the past 10 years for Planned Parenthood. Started in Planned Parenthood through "New Careers" training program. Marian has given many human sexuality lectures to teenage parent groups, church groups, community agencies, etc. Marian is the mother of seven children--ages 14 to 25.

DAVID BONES: Former pastor of United Methodist Church. He has a Bachelor of Science degree, Master of Divinity--Garrett Theological Seminary, Northwestern University. David has conducted numerous seminars and workshops and is a sex educator certified by the American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors, Therapists. David currently works for Planned Parenthood (for the past 6 years) and is the father of two.

MARILYN MARTIN-MAJOR: Rehabilitation counselor for the past 5 years at the Nebraska Department of Education. B.A. from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. M.S. from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Currently working on masters in social work at U.N.O. Marilyn has given extensive workshops and classes on assertiveness skills and is a member of the National Association of Social Workers. She is a single mother of four.

MARGARET VRANA: Currently a consultant for Homestead Institute for Creative Living. Margaret has been a teacher and practitioner of personal growth for several years. Her work is a "continuing integration of many forms of healing and self-awareness." She has an M.Ed. degree and provides workshops regarding meditation, nutrition, and relaxation/anxiety-reduction techniques.

MARY ANN BIANCHI: Currently Director of Westside Early Childhood Center. Has taught in public schools--kindergarten through sixth grade. She has a B.S. and M.A. in elementary and early childhood education. She also team teaches a parenting course for high school students. Mary Ann has conducted numerous workshops for local and national child welfare and education associations.

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ANSWERS: a. Tim Sindelar b. Marian Williams c. Marilyn Martin-Major
d. David Bones e. Margaret Vrana f. Barry Spath
g. Mary Ann Bianchi h. John Whitehouse